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ABSTRACT

The goal of the seminar reported in this document was to consider the site leadership and management issue as it relates to professionals' changing roles and influences educational equity and excellence. The seminar attempted to bring sensitive reform movement issues back to those most affected by their implications. An important seminar element was the development of leadership models to be later implemented at various states throughout New York State. Each of six Principal Centers, New York University, and the New York City Board of Education will then coordinate, support, and provide technical assistance to school buildings and professional groups involved in the ongoing Leadership in Educational Administration Development Program (LEAD). This report consists chiefly of five presentations from mixed groups of administrators and teachers that express participants' thoughts and experiences. These presentations were the result of long hours of intense, often heated discussion, out of which a spirit of cooperation finally emerged, so that the groups achieved consensus of a philosophy and on alternative models for shared decision-making. All groups recognized that no one model was appropriate for every school, and some groups created a generic model that a school could adapt to suit its own environment. The groups all saw the need for a diversity of models. Each group's special contribution to the seminar is evident in their reports. A list of participants, an explanation of the seminar process, and a reprint of an article on the seminar are also included in this report. (MHL)

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Leadership in Educational Administration Development Center

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A View from the Inside: SCHOOL BUILDING LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Report of the Select Seminar on School Building Leadership and Management

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New York State
LEAD Center

Leadership in Educational Administration Development Center
Capital Area School Development Association

A View From the Inside: School Building Leadership and Management

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March, 1988

Report of the Select Seminar on School Building Leadership and Management

Funding for this publication and the seminar was provided by the New York State Leadership in Educational Administration Development (LEAD) Center

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Reprint of the Article: "Select Seminar 20
on School Building Leadership and Management Opens
LEAD Center Activities" from CASDAIDS,
Vol. XXVI, No. 2, December 1987

Preface

The Select Seminar on School Building Leadership and Management sponsored by the Leadership in Educational Administration Development Program (LEAD) for New York State was conducted from September 27-30, 1987, at the Rensselaerville Institute. The purpose of the seminar was to bring together teachers, administrators, and school board members from throughout New York State representing urban, rural, and suburban districts at every level—elementary, middle and secondary—to address the critical and hotly debated issue of school site leadership.

This report of the work of the seminar is one of a series of white papers that will be widely distributed to federal, state and local policy makers, institutions of higher education, and colleagues in elementary and secondary schools. The strength, credibility, and integrity of this report is based on the fact that it comes from field practitioners, those individuals, who on a daily basis, are affected by the culture of school buildings. The goal of the seminar, as reflected in the content, was to consider the issue of site leadership and management as it relates to the changing roles of professionals and as it impacts on excellence and equity in our schools. The essence of the seminar was its attempt to bring the sensitive issues of the reform movement back to where they belong—to those most affected by its implications.

An important element of the seminar was the development of leadership models, parts of which will be implemented at various sites throughout New York State. Each of six Principal Centers across the State, New York University, and the New York City Board of Education will coordinate, support, and provide technical assistance to school buildings and professional groups involved in the LEAD project. One of the basic functions of the LEAD Center, central to the seminar conversations, was to provide a grassroots forum for the discussion of leadership and management through an ongoing conversation among principals, teachers, superintendents, board of education members, and school of education faculty. This seminar provided a forum for the beginning of this process.

This report consists of five presentations from mixed groups which express their thoughts and experiences. Because the presentations reflect a wide range of research, ideas, feelings, and field observations, they should not be seen as remedies to complex concerns. The process of the seminar must be seen as being more important than the product.

Richard Bamberger, Executive Director
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The CASDA select seminars follow a very simple structure based upon a set of guiding principles:

1. ***Participants need to commit adequate time—to work, to reflect, and to write.***
   This seminar was conducted on four consecutive days at the Rensselaerville Institute.

2. ***A conducive working environment is very important.***
   The seminars have been conducted in "protected environments"—away from the work site, in quiet and aesthetically pleasing surroundings. We believe this clearly is a first step in communicating to participants that the seminar is special and there are high expectations that the deliberations of its members will have an important result.

3. ***The seminar participants are the experts.***
   We believe the select seminars have been successful because of the high degree of personal and professional respect afforded participants. While participants do extensive reading for the seminars, visiting experts and lecturers are not a part of this experience. The forty individuals who participated in this seminar represented years of educational experience. They constituted the body of experts.

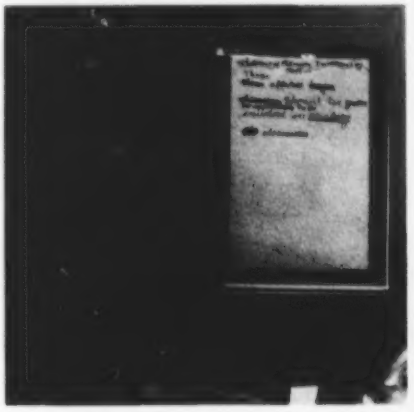
4. ***Roles are "checked at the door."***
   One's idea must stand on its own, be debated, accepted, or discarded without reference to one's position, prior experience, or education. This seminar included school superintendents, principals, supervisors, teachers, school board members, college staff, and State Education Department personnel.

5. ***Seminars are self-governing entities with organizers serving the group.***
   The coordination of the seminar was managed by LEAD Center-CASDA staff and a university professor. After providing the initial structure and on-going logistical support, they worked to transfer the governance and direction from themselves to the participants. By the end of the seminar it is fair to say that it was self-governed with the coordinators taking direction from the seminar group.

6. ***The experience is as important as the product.***
   All seminar participants agree that the process, the experience, is most important. Even so, the report provides an important

documentation of the experience and serves to validate for each of the participants the energy and effort they expended.

It is also hoped that this report will provide inspiration and help to those who read it and may assist in a modest way to continue what has become a very important national conversation on leadership and schools. We firmly believe such an ongoing conversation can only result in better education for all our children.



Introduction

It was a warm September evening at the end of the month. Approximately forty educators—teachers, administrators, and board members—faced one another as they sat around tables forming a huge circle in a conference room at the Rensselaerville Institute. Brought together by the LEAD Center at CASDA from all parts of New York State, they wondered what the outcome of their discussions on shared decision making would be. After all, each had a personal perspective on the topic; each had strong ideas reflecting varied experiences in either urban, suburban, or rural schools; each felt those ideas were valid. They all faced one question: by the conference's end could they arrive at consensus on any aspect of shared decision making or would the four days simply be an exercise in futility—just endless hours of talking?

Well, endless hours of talking, arguing, discussion, wrangling—over concepts, sentences, phrases, specific words, detail—did follow. Participants first met in role groups to generate a series of general and specific observations as well as model projects relating to the topic. That evening loud voices often responded strongly and defiantly to points raised in the different role groups' presentations. The issues of teacher empowerment and contractual agreements seemed to conflict with a belief in creating the climate of trust and integrity necessary for shared decision making. The presence of teachers and administrators from Rochester with their conflicting viewpoints also helped create an air of contention. A polarity between teachers at the conference and administrators clearly existed. By the evening's end some people wondered how they could even meet the following day in mixed role groups to work cooperatively on formulating a philosophy, a possible model, and observations—all relating to shared decision making.

"The issues of teacher empowerment and contractual agreements seemed to conflict with a belief in creating the climate of trust and integrity necessary for shared decision making."

That following morning was sunny and warm. People expressed a desire to walk on the trails by the lake or read by the tennis court; many simply were reluctant to face more hours of talking and writing. Many wondered if the mixed groups could accomplish anything at all. Yet—they met.

In several groups more questions were raised than answers delineated, especially on issues of power, contracts, accountability, and climate. A wide range of perspectives existed on the meaning of shared decision making as well as on its implementation. Some groups spent hours hammering out each word in a philosophical statement; others formulated a concept within minutes. People argued to have their viewpoints included, and thus validated.

By late afternoon, however, an important event had occurred. Yes, participants still possessed many differences of opinion. But they also began to reach a clearer understanding of one another's role in educa-

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tion and the personal concerns and beliefs that resulted from that role. The process of trying to arrive at consensus on some points then became more important than those individual opinions. A spirit of cooperation developed; intensity heightened as people focused on the task rather than on dissent. The groups succeeded in achieving consensus on major points concerning the topic, on a philosophy, and on possible models for shared decision making. All groups recognized that no one model was appropriate for every school—that models should reflect the needs and conditions of the particular buildings in which they are to operate. Some groups thus created a generic model that a school could adapt to fit its own environment. The groups all saw the need for a diversity of models.

By 4:30 p.m. most groups had finished—a bit exhausted from all the arguing, talking, agreeing, disagreeing. Though it was still warm outside, several group members lingered to continue discussing points raised during their meetings. Other group members prepared visual presentations for all conference participants for that evening's session. Somehow many members were reluctant to leave. They knew they had experienced a rare event—a time and a place apart from their daily routines to discuss a critical educational issue.

The last evening the mixed groups presented their final reports. Conference participants listened, they responded, they laughed, they applauded, they wanted to return in the spring for a follow-up session. It had been well worth the frustration and dissension at times and the exhaustion at the end. Success always is.

> ***"All groups recognized that no one model was appropriate for every school—that models should reflect the needs and conditions of the particular buildings in which they are to operate."***

> ***"It had been well worth the frustration and dissension at times and the exhaustion at the end. Success always is."***

More Questions Than Answers 3

> ***"School building leadership should empower staff to meet the agreed-upon goals aimed at providing effective instruction for all students."***

Imagine a group of people composed of two teachers, four administrators, and a superintendent sitting in a small room and facing the task of formulating a philosophy and possible model for implementing shared decision making. The administrators are deeply concerned about accountability to their superintendents, school boards, and communities. The teachers desire to change the educational structure to facilitate a greater role for teachers as decision makers. In Group I they argue, dissent, discuss, but eventually agree on some points. First, they see a key point is that the people most affected by a decision must be involved in making that decision. Second, they agree that shared decision making must connect with the teaching-learning process. By morning's end the group has formulated the following philosophical statement concerning school building leadership:

> *School building leadership should empower staff to meet the agreed-upon goals aimed at providing effective instruction for all students.*
>
> *In addition, it provides the time and resources to achieve these goals in a climate of trust and integrity. This climate also will nurture a diversity of opinions, knowledge, skills, and styles as well as a readiness to work collegially. Such leadership also enables people in a school setting to learn and grow in a positive environment. It recognizes that the people most affected by a decision must have the opportunity to be involved in that decision, formally and informally. It should also be recognized that there are situations where there is a need for unilateral decisions. Finally, with shared decision making come shared responsibility and accountability.*

The group's discussion inevitably raised more questions than it could answer. In analyzing the topic from the varied points of view of teachers and administrators, it became clear that several important questions warranted further ongoing discussion. Those questions are:

1. Is shared decision making a building or a district decision?
2. Who makes the ultimate decision, outside of collective bargaining agreements?
3. Who is accountable? How do we evaluate the decisions?
4. How will the decisions coordinate with district/building level goals and objectives?
5. How will the roles of all involved in the process, including all bargaining units, be delineated?
6. What will be the selection process for a school-based planning team?
7. How will all the people involved in the process be prepared for it?
8. Should team members be compensated? If so, how and when?
9. Who evaluates the effectiveness of a school-based team?
10. What problems will be considered appropriate for a shared decision-making process?
11. Will the decisions of a school-based team carry clout?

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12. How will staff, especially new teachers and new administrators, be exposed to the concepts, trends, and research supporting shared decision making?
13. How can we ensure that shared decision making addresses real needs and resources? Can it also be used to develop a "wish list" and set goals and future priorities?
14. What are the political and economic implications of shared decision making?

Finally, group members agreed that a process to form a building team could be a generic model easily adapted to a particular school's needs. Such a process for organizing and implementing a school-based team would be:

1. Members are elected to the school-based team by their constituents with subgroups formed as needed.
2. The team identifies and clarifies the problem. It determines whether it is an ad hoc or district problem, long term or short term, and whom it concerns.
3. The team directs or charges a subgroup to resolve the problem, with troubleshooting, if necessary.
4. The subgroup recommends a solution to the team—ad hoc, district wide, long or short term.
5. The team assesses the impact of the solution and accepts, rejects, or modifies it.
6. The team facilitates the implementation of the solution.
7. It monitors and adjusts the implementation.
8. The team and the subgroup involved evaluate the solution and its implementation.
9. After celebration, the team attacks the next problem.

"It recognizes that the people most affected by a decision must have the opportunity to be involved in that decision, formally and informally."

Leadership Groups 5

> ***"The model that developed could be considered one where there can be considerable adaptation depending upon the local situation."***

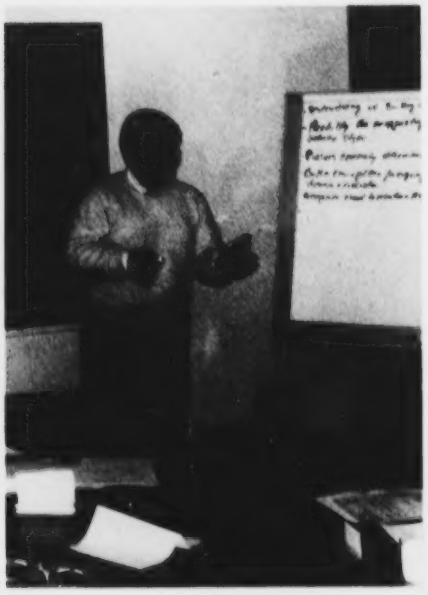
In Group II there was a wide range of perspectives on what shared decision making means generally and how it might be implemented specifically. In order to provide some base line commonalities, the group spent a considerable amount of time in arriving at consensus on a concise philosophy of shared decision making that could be accepted by all present. It was pointed out that the process of developing a philosophy of shared decision making is as important as the philosophy itself.

There was also a considerable amount of discussion on the definition of teacher empowerment and recent developments in the Rochester School District relating to this topic. This discussion resulted in a series of observations and recommendations.

The group then began to identify aspects of a model that could eventually be used to implement a shared decision-making process within a school. The model that developed could be considered one where there can be considerable adaptation depending on the local situation.

Following are some observations made while discussing shared decision making:

1. There is no one model for shared decision making that can be identified. At each building it will be necessary to assess readiness for shared decision making based on the needs of the learners, conditions within the building, and attitudes of the staff.
2. It should be recognized and taken into account that while many teachers want to participate in a shared decision-making process, there are many who currently do not wish to become involved and who may continue to wish not to be involved.
3. Many districts are already involved in some significant aspects of shared decision making, particularly in the area of curriculum work. It will be easier to implement a shared decision-making process in a district that already has some structure which can be utilized. Areas of decision making which may already exist in school districts include teacher participation on hiring committees, curriculum development, textbook selection, student placement, and setting of building goals.
4. Important to the implementation of shared decision making is a trust and commitment to the process. People involved will need to have integrity and trust in one another in order for the process to succeed.
5. The faculty must be involved in a meaningful way in the process. While it would be wise to begin with some activities that would be more easily accomplished so that success would be likely, the process will ultimately have to address critical issues in order to be meaningful. The involvement of faculty will need to be compen-



sated for—either through released time or direct payment so that the activity would not be considered just another add-on committee. Leaders among the teachers as well as in the administration must buy into the process for it to be considered seriously.

6. Those involved in the process should receive appropriate training for their role in the shared decision-making process.
7. The assignment of accountability should be given to those in the shared decision-making group. There is some concern that even though a particular decision is made through a shared decision-making process, accountability, particularly as it may point to blame, will rest on the shoulders of one person, likely the principal.
8. The organization of a shared decision-making process should be written with specific procedures and by-laws in order for it to become an integral part of each building.

A MODEL For *Leadership Groups*

PHILOSOPHY

ASSUMPTIONS:	1) Concept accepted by those involved Administrators/Teachers/Parents/Students 2) Work within district goals
FORMATION OF COMMITTEE	1) Elected 2) Selected
COMMITTEE TRAINING	
ORGANIZATION— BY-LAWS	1) Voting procedures 2) Meetings 3) Agendas 4) Communication 5) Operating Procedures 6) Subcommittees 7) Time/Compensation
AREAS FOR DECISION MAKING (SUGGESTED)	1) Staff development 2) Curriculum development 3) Budget 4) Selection of staff 5) Teaching assignments 6) Textbooks/materials 7) Placement/promotion
COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES	1) Goal setting 2) Data gathering 3) Committee interaction 4) Decision making 5) Evaluation
EVALUATION	1) Process 2) Outcomes

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Throughout preliminary discussion in Group III regarding shared decision making or shared-leadership responsibility, it quickly became apparent that such programs or models must exist and operate on a continuum. The dimensions of this continuum, as envisioned by Group III, ranged from the Autocratic (Principal as Decision Maker) model to the Undifferentiated Democratic (Athenian) model. The fundamental rationale for this perspective resulted from a recognition of the local school building as the critical focus for educational program direction.

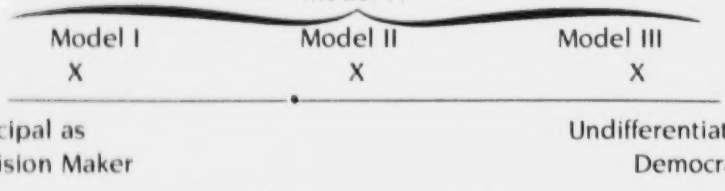
Group members reached a consensus regarding essential pre-conditions for model development and implementation. They are:

1. State and local policy decisions need to change in order to support and reinforce the decentralization of decision making at the building level.
2. Teacher and administrator associations/unions must be involved in the planning, operation and evaluation of the new model(s).
3. In order to clarify jurisdictional areas and disputes, all aspects of the new model(s) need to become part of institutionalized working agreements (contractual and/or extra contractual).

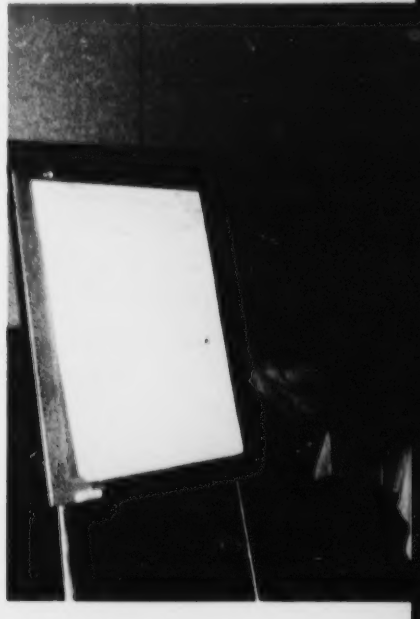
Having delineated these pre-conditions, the group proceeded to generate four distinct models. These models varied with regard to their location along the earlier discussed continuum, yet they remained faithful to the essential pre-conditions noted above.

"The fundamental rationale for this perspective resulted from a recognition of the local school building as the critical focus for educational program direction."

Continuum



Model I School Planning Team Model
Model II School Policy Board Model (Delegated Policy Model)
Model III Instructional Leadership Board Model
Model IV Generic: Shared Decision-Making Model



> ***"The School Planning Team Model will be truly collaborative and will consist of the building principal, elected teachers, parents, non-instructional staff and students where appropriate."***

Model I: *School Planning Team Model*

The School Planning Team Model will be truly collaborative and will consist of the building principal, elected teachers, parents, non-instructional staff and students where appropriate.

In addition to the earlier mentioned preconditions, an accompanying list of preconditions must be reviewed prior to the implementation of any shared decision-making model. They are:

1. district support for the concept of vertical integration
2. union and/or association support prior to involvement in the process
3. greater responsibility by the individual school for all aspects of the school over which they have input
4. inservice training: teachers, principals, staff
5. development of feelings of trust and integrity among team members
6. assessment of readiness level, a comfort level for change
7. commitment to growth and change for all participants

Team meetings will be regularly scheduled within the school day or compensation will be provided. In addition to scheduling concerns, environment will be given primary focus. All meetings will be conducted in an environment conducive to maximizing team output. For example, luncheon or dinner as well as a comfortable meeting place could be provided.

The importance of effective communication, at both the formal and informal levels, will remain a vital concern of the team. The agenda must be given to all staff prior to meetings, and the minutes published and given to staff after the meetings; pyramid groups will be set up to ensure broader based input, i.e., written articles; PTA newsletters will be published, etc.

Recognizing these structural concerns, the first major thrust of the group will be to decide on a statement of purpose, followed by expected outcomes. An important consideration at this point is to start with a goal that addresses a problem of significant meaning for the staff in order to enhance the credibility of the team.

All issues of concern to the school community are open to discussion and consideration.

A prioritizing of goals is necessary in both the areas of short and long term goals such as: one-year, three-year, five-year goals.

Some suggested areas for consideration and implementation are: Discipline, Scheduling, Inservice, Grouping of Students and Classes, Referral to Committee on Special Education, Placement/Promotion, Clerical Supervision, Peer Coaching, Staff Selection, Budget, Curriculum, Textbook Selection, School Activities.

In meetings, all members of the committees are to share equally in discussions and input. Consensus is sought when possible. The principal should make every attempt possible to listen, react, and provide resources to reach the Planning Team's objective. However, a final veto power may be exercised with sufficient explanation and opportunity for future consideration.

In conclusion, time and consideration should be given for the celebration of success. Successes must be reiterated for celebration and results publicized.

"The principal should make every attempt possible to listen, react, and provide resources to reach the Planning Team's objective."

Model II *School Policy Board Model*: A *Delegated Policy Model*

The delegated policy model is predicated on the assumption that the district (central) office has delegated to the school a clear statement of areas in which the school has decision-making authority. Among these areas of decision-making authority would be as much discretion over curriculum staffing and budget as possible. This model further assumes that individuals responsible for implementing decisions ought to be centrally involved in the making of those decisions.

It is obvious that the specific features of the model would need to be tailored for the unique setting in which it is operating—and consequently, it would be a waste of time to try to identify the general features of a model that would fit all situations. For the purposes of this model, we will be imagining the following school context: an elementary school serving about 500 students from a relatively homogeneous area of the community.

The School Policy Board will be composed of nine members: the principal, two parents (chosen by the PTA), five teachers (union representative and four elected by entire teaching staff), and one non-professional member of the staff (elected by non-professional staff). The Policy Board will meet at least once every two weeks, either during school time or with compensation. The principal will prepare the agenda (after receiving items from the group), but will **not** preside over the meetings. The principal's office will also take care of all the logistics and support services for the Policy Board meetings. The Policy Board will elect a chairperson who will serve a two-year term.

Although it is difficult to be specific regarding the Policy Board's area of jurisdiction without knowing what the central office has delegated to them, the following areas serve as examples of the types of responsibilities the Policy Board could address:

1. Establishment of school mission and priorities within the framework of the district's overall mission and priorities. The Policy Board will conduct a needs assessment for the school, and from the results and through interaction with the school's various con-

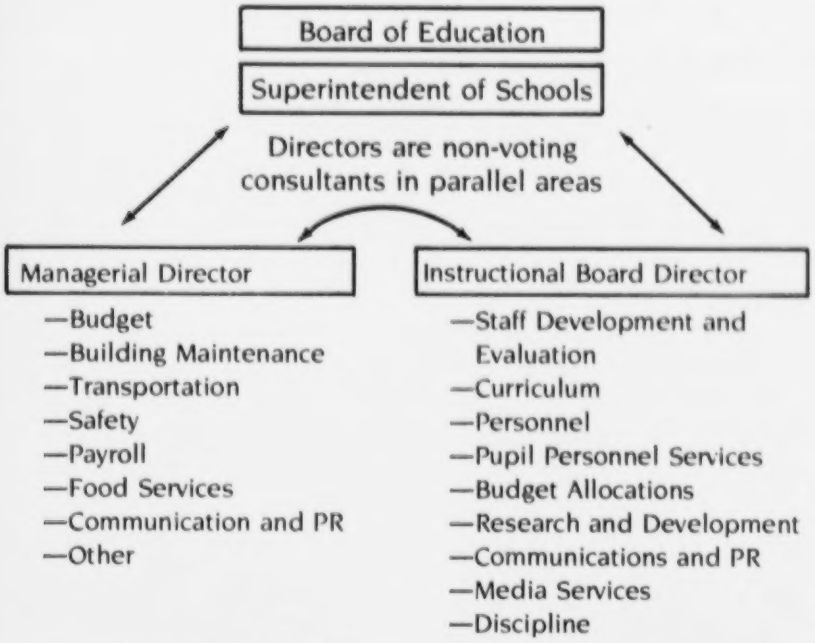
> ***"The delegated policy model is predicated on the assumption that the district (central) office has delegated to the school a clear statement of areas in which the school has the decision-making authority."***

stituencies, it will develop a statement of the school's mission and list of priorities.

2. Staffing
   —*Hiring of staff*: oversee interview and review process and make recommendations to superintendent.
   —*Staff development*: within the guidelines from the district office, prepare school-wide staff development plan and allocate discretionary resources to implement that plan.
   —*Supervision and evaluation*: supervision is the responsibility of the principal and lead teachers; evaluation is the responsibility of the principal. The Policy Board will **not** be formally involved in these areas.
   —*Staffing assignments*: within certification and contract provisions, the Policy Board will review the recommendations of the principal on staffing assignments and make final decisions.
3. Curriculum and instruction
   —*Textbook and curricular selection/development*: the Policy Board will review school needs and, to the extent that they are permitted by district-wide delegations, will delegate to grade-level or to cross-grade-level teams of teachers the authority for selecting books and materials.
   —*Instructional policies*: within state and local mandates, such as homework policies, it will allocate time for subject-area instruction and determine grouping policies.
4. Budget and resource allocation
   —Within the delegations from the district office, the Policy Board will determine budget and resource allocation, consistent with the established school mission and priorities.

The Policy Board's decisions will be made by consensus whenever possible. When consensus is not possible, a 2/3 majority (minimum of six votes) will be required. The principal will have veto power over matters related to legal or district policy issues. In the event that the principal exercises the veto, he/she will be required to prepare a written justification outlining the reasons for the veto. If the Policy Board is not satisfied with his/her justification, the Board has the right to appeal the decision to the superintendent of schools.

Model III *Instructional Leadership Board Model*



The school building is to be governed by an Instructional Leadership Board (ILB) which consists of LEAD TEACHERS selected upon nomination by the professional staff and subject to approval by the superintendent and the board of education. The ILB elects the Instructional Director who chairs the ILB, is full time, and has the highest salary. The Director serves a minimum term of two years and is chosen from the membership of the ILB including the Principal, who serves as a non-voting member or consultant.

The Instructional Leadership Board is responsible for the overall leadership of the building and the delegation of instructional functions to individual LEAD TEACHERS. Responsibility for one or more functions may be combined (note chart).

The ILB meets weekly and issues an annual report.

Role of LEAD Teachers:

Each LEAD teacher has authority and responsibility for a designated area(s) and serves as a voting member of the Instructional Board of the school.

Role of the Instructional Director:

The Instructional Director is a full-time person who serves as Chair of the ILB and coordinates the overall day-to-day instructional services of the school.

"The school building is to be governed by an Instructional Leadership Board (ILB) which consists of LEAD TEACHERS selected upon nomination by the professional staff and subject to approval by the superintendent and the board of education."

> ***"The purpose of this model is to propose a process rather than supply an operative product."***

Role of the School Principal:

The School Administrator is selected upon nomination by the professional staff and approved by the superintendent and board of education. He/she is responsible for management functions of the school and serves as a facilitator to the ILB.

Model IV *Generic*: *Shared Decision-Making Model*

The purpose of this model is to propose a process rather than supply an operative product. Those reviewing this model should pay particular attention to the fact that it exists at no specific point along the continuum and therefore represents an apolitical review of the Shared Decision-Making concept. The process resembles both the models of Group I and Group II and includes identifying and defining a problem, assessing needs to solve the problem, setting goals and objectives, planning for implementation, and evaluating.

14 A View From the Inside:

Group IV first worked at developing a philosophy to guide the discussion and creation of a possible model. The philosophy consisted of only three sentences, but it encompassed the group's beliefs. It is stated as follows:

> *—It is the philosophy of Group IV that the current leadership structure should be studied.*
> *—Any new leadership structure should evolve from a combined effort of the staff and community in a shared decision-making process.*
> *—The goal is to improve the educational setting by utilizing the expertise of all and by widening the accountability of all.*

The first statement implies the group's belief that a need to study and modify the current structure exists. It was agreed that "things could be better." The second statement indicates the group's feelings that all members of the school building staff and the community at large must be involved in developing this new structure. The group also felt strongly that a shared decision-making process would have to be prominent in developing this structure. The last statement of the philosophy shows the belief that the only reason to change the existing structure is if it improves the education of the children.

The philosophy indicates the necessity of using the experience of those in the field and states that all involved in the process must be willing to accept the increased accountability.

The group then developed two lists of topics to consider in creating any new leadership structure. The first list names the areas in which shared decision making would be useful. These areas include:

—staff selection and induction
—staff development
—differentiated staff assignment
—teacher evaluation
—building concerns and procedures
—budget development process
—curriculum development
—student placement
—student promotion
—communication with the community

The second list shows the factors the group felt had to be considered to make the leadership evolution work. Such factors include:

—a knowledge base that is research driven. The people involved in the process must understand the status quo as well as share information concerning philosophies, policies, goals, mandates, laws, and budget limitations.

—district support. The district must make a commitment to the process in terms of time and money. Staff must be trained in the

"The philosophy indicates the necessity of using the experience of those in the field and states that all involved in the process must be willing to accept the increased accountability."

> ***"Team members would have to be trained in problem solving and decision making and be given the proper forum for discussing these issues."***

decision-making process and such involvement must be on "company time" which would involve non-traditional days as well as a creative use of time. The district must also sell the plan to the staff and the community to ensure budgetary and moral support.

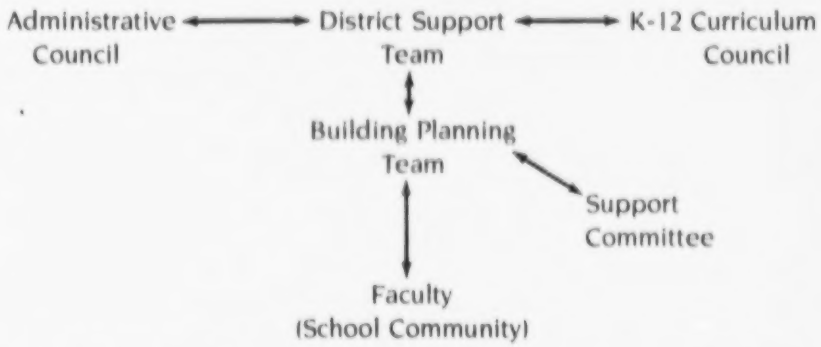
—shared decision making and shared accountability within a climate of trust among all parties involved in the process.

—a written agreement that describes the process.

—evaluation of the process.

The group, in realizing that no one model would fit all situations, then developed a model that would include the factors listed above. This model also used components in current use in the schools represented in our group.

The Model



The above model centers on the Building Planning Team. The faculty would choose the representatives to this team; the principal would also be a member of it. The team would consider which areas to discuss and problem-solve. It would use a variety of methods and structures based upon the "culture" of the building. Team members would have to be trained in problem solving and decision making and be given the proper forum for discussing these issues.

Each building team would have a representative on the district support committee. This committee would provide information needed by the building team. It also would provide a place for the teams to share information as well as act as a facilitator for any requests the teams make or projects they suggest. The superintendent would have a member on this committee.

The K-12 Curriculum Council would consist of parents, students, teachers, and administrators. The structure and methods of this group would also vary according to the local "culture." This Council would review all curriculum matters and control the formation of inter-building committees if the curriculum matters involved more than one school.

16 A View From the Inside:

The Administrative Council would consist of all administrators and would review all concerns and provide information.

The key feature of this model is sharing the knowledge base. There is no sense in attempting to problem-solve if participants do not understand the boundaries in which they must operate. Also, all decisions should be accompanied by a rationale.

Another feature of this model is that support committees would be formed as needs developed. They would have a specific purpose and would be phased out as they complete their tasks. Support committees from various buildings would join to deal with common concerns.

Questions Concerning a Site-Based Leadership Model [17]

> ***"Inherent in the philosophy is the belief that the collective wisdom of the group exceeds that of any one individual."***

> ***"People must be directly involved from the outset in designing and implementing a site-based management plan openly, sharing on a regular basis in decisions of a substantive nature."***

It seemed reasonable to Group V members to expect that conference participants would hold in common a high degree of dissatisfaction with current leadership models. As the work sessions progressed, however, it became increasingly clear that a particular organizational design was less often the issue than such matters as leadership style and interpersonal relationships. On the basis of those discussions concerning organizational designs and relationships, however, the group agreed on the need to provide guidelines, perhaps a template, to be used in evaluating existing situations. Given a commitment to such concepts as shared decision making, empowerment, partnerships, and team building, appropriate local organizational designs would then be more likely to follow.

Philosophically, the group agreed that any organizational form must make it possible to create a school climate that supports the personal development of children while they are engaged in the educational process. Such an organization would also be flexible and responsive while providing for regular dialogue and shared decision making between and among the various groups of the school community. Inherent in the philosophy is the belief that the collective wisdom of the group exceeds that of any one individual. Using a shared decision-making process will thus lead to the enhancement of shared ownership which will ensure the investment of self necessary to produce optimum results. In addition to a local mission statement, it is also vital to include a clearly stated commitment to enhancing the teaching/learning situation. Of necessity, all other relationships within an organization must take their meaning from the interaction between teacher and student.

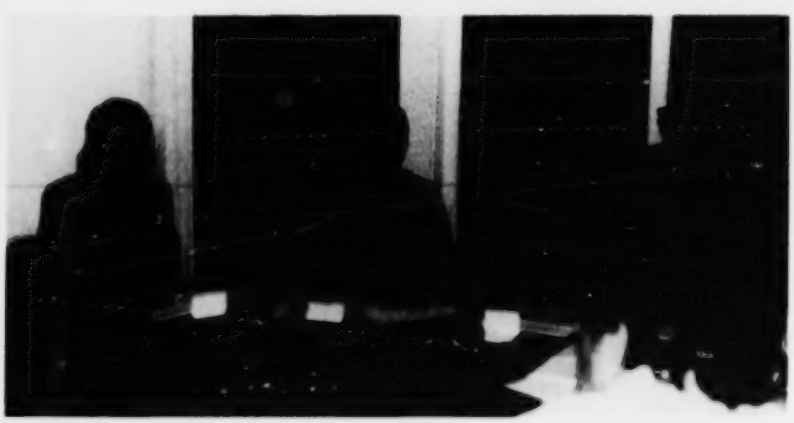
In discussing the creation of an organizational model, the group then focused on concerns that connected with a local model's design specifications. The group felt that any management model must provide for regular and continuous involvement on the part of all persons. Assuming that an appropriate mission statement exists, the effort to design a model must first embrace the task of writing a clear and agreed upon statement of performance expectations. To move into matters related to role definition, resource allocation, job titles and the like without such a statement is to invite failure. After listing performance expectations, members of the planning team must consider the need to ensure internal communications which are continuous, timely, and accurate. People must be directly involved from the outset in designing and implementing a site-based management plan openly, sharing on a regular basis in decisions of a substantive nature. Finally, in creating a model, it is reasonable to expect that there will be an effort to prepare staff and others for successful participation in it and to expect that the model will provide for regular feedback and evaluation.

In discussing a site-based leadership model, group members raised many questions related to such issues as power, resources, accountability, and transition. With the issue of power, the group had particular concerns about the sharing or shifting of decision-making rights without the accompanying sharing of accountability. This concern relates to legal or contractual considerations, the reality of historical roles and relationships within a school district, the we/they aspects of power as currently defined in most school situations, and the connection with career paths and rewards.

The issue of resources is related to the fact that both human and financial allocations are currently determined on the basis of traditional organizational models and on the perceived ability to raise required funds. While the group agreed that it does not necessarily follow that a move to site-based management will result in increased costs, that is a very real possibility. In addition, changes in role definition and responsibility are almost certain to translate into changes concerning who decides matters related to resource allocation.

Finally, no matter how open to change or supportive of new directions administrators, teachers, and board members may be, there are also those who exist who question whether or not we can or should "get there from here." The group asked: How do we help our various constituencies make the transition from where we are to where we want to be? Particularly in those communities where we are perceived as already providing programs and services of quality, how do we convince them of the need to change? Should we, under those circumstances, even consider the matter of site-based management? We then asked: Having established the need for change and developed the support for particular change, who is it that "minds the store" during the transition from that which has been to that which must be? Such questions need to be answered in the process of creating any appropriate local site-based management model.

"...no matter how open to change or supportive of new directions administrators, teachers, and board members may be, there are also those who exist who question whether or not we can or should 'get there from here.'"



Conclusion 19

> ***"Though people realized that those affected by a decision must be involved in making that decision, many also wondered how to include those people in the final accountability for that decision."***

The rain poured outside on the final day of the conference as participants sat inside with their groups for one last time. As they reviewed changes in their group presentations, they continued to discuss issues raised during the previous days' and nights' events. They also continued to reflect upon the revolutionary developments in Rochester. Later that morning they all sat in the amphitheater as group members made presentations to invited educators from nearby school districts, state associations, and university professors, and interacted with them as they, too, desired to debate issues of empowerment, accountability, leadership structures, and finances.

It was again obvious that the conference raised more questions than educators could answer. Conflicting points still existed. Though participants expressed the need for shared decision making in a climate of trust and openness, some wanted the process to be validated and maintained through contract negotiations. Others viewed such negotiations as violating that climate of trust. Though people realized that those affected by a decision must be involved in making that decision, many also wondered how to include those people in the final accountability for that decision. Could accountability ever rest with a committee rather than an individual? Though shared decision making is a hotly debated topic currently in education, many wondered if their own schools and staffs really were ready for this concept or even desired to consider discussing it for their district. The conference did not resolve those inconsistencies; it did not answer all the questions. But then, that was not its purpose.

After lunch on the last day, people had packed their bags. They were ready to head home. In the ending session, however, they sat one last time in a circle to express their reactions to the conference. It was a wonderful moment of personal reflection and sharing. It was clear that a spirit of collegiality and friendship had emerged among the participants. Yes, they still possessed some of the same opinions they had the first day; but they were also leaving with some new ideas. They ended with seeing more areas of agreement than conflict. In spite of hours spent talking, people wanted to return in the spring to talk some more. The conference was a success.

Select Seminar on School Building Leadership

The Leadership in Educational Administration Development Program (LEAD) for New York State conducted a four-day seminar on School Building Leadership and Management at Rensselaerville Institute on September 27-30.

Forty teachers, administrators, and school board members from New York State representing urban, rural, and suburban districts at every level—elementary, middle and secondary—took part in the seminar. The seminar provided a format for addressing the critical and hotly-debated issue of school leadership. A formal report from the proceedings will be published in early 1988. An important aspect of the seminar was the development of leadership models which will be implemented at various sites throughout New York State. Each of six Principals' Centers across the State will coordinate, support, and supply technical assistance to the school buildings involved in the project. One of the basic functions of the LEAD Center is to provide a grassroots forum for the discussion of leadership and management of elementary and secondary school buildings—an ongoing conversation among principals, teachers, superintendents, college of education faculty, parents and community groups. This seminar provided a forum for the beginning of this process.

Participants are presently developing the seminar report. Gayle Adams (Ardsley), Kenneth Dyl (Cleveland Hill), John Piechnik (Voorheesville), Arthur Schneider (Greece) and Paul Ruda (Cleveland Hill) are members of the writing team.

Seminar participants, during the process of study, reflection, writing, discussion, and questioning, developed both generic and specific strategies that are necessary in order for collaborative site management to become a reality. The Seminar achieved a general consensus about school building leadership which is reflected in the following excerpt from the seminar report.

> . . . School building leadership should empower staff to meet the agreed upon goals aimed at providing effective instruction for all students. In addition, it provides the time and resources to achieve these goals in a climate of trust and integrity. This climate will also nurture a diversity of opinions, knowledge, skills, and styles as well as a readiness to work collegially. Such leadership also enables all people in a school setting to learn and grow in a positive environment. It recognizes that the people most affected by a decision must have the opportunity to be involved in that decision, formally and informally. It should also be recognized that there are situations where there is a need for unilateral decisions. Finally, with shared decision making comes shared responsibility and accountability.

Seminar participants also discussed and raised a series of questions that each district must address when entering into a model of shared decision making. Those questions included, but were not limited to. . .

- —Who makes the ultimate decision, outside of collective bargaining agreement?
- —Is shared decision making a building decision or a district decision?
- —Who is accountable? How do we evaluate the decisions?
- —How will the decisions coordinate with district/building level goals and objectives?
- —How will the roles of all involved in the process be delineated?
- —Who evaluates the effectiveness of a school-based team?
- —What problems will be considered appropriate for a shared decision making process?
- —How should staff, especially new teachers and new administrators, be exposed to the concepts, trends, and research supporting shared decision making?
- —How can we assure that shared decision making addresses real needs and resources?
- —How will all people involved in the process be made ready for it?
- —What are the political implications of shared decision making?
- —What are the economic implications of such a process?

Among and across the groups, certain themes developed that appear to enhance and strengthen collegiality and professionalism. Concepts such as trust, confidence, respect, and integrity were constantly mentioned as necessary ingredients in all models. The quality of the people involved in the process was also seen as being extremely important.

Finally, the theme of allowing practitioners, those most closely affected by decisions, to drive the process became a common point of emphasis. The necessity of allowing the important and critical issues of leadership to be addressed by the rank and file rather than groups of extremists was viewed as a condition whose time has come.

The following excerpts are taken from participant comments:

I learned that:

—Administrators statewide are ready

PARTICIPANTS AT THE SEMINAR (from left to right): Peter Griffin, Voorheesville; Dan Heffernan, Director, Rochester Principals' Academy; Joseph Mastro, Nanuet.

CONFERING ON THE ISSUES are (from left to right): Susan Goodwin, Rochester; Judy Katz, Williamsville; Tony Link, Williamsville; and Arline Gold, Nanuet.

and Management Opens LEAD Center Activities

for positive movement given the opportunity.

—There is a broad based support for movement in the direction of shared leadership.

—Shared decision making means different things to teachers and administrators.

—Ideas can be shared, learned from, and fortunately, most administrators have not forgotten what being a teacher means.

—There is more consensus than disagreement among teachers, principals, etc., than previously realized in regard to leadership.

—The issue of shared decision making is more complex than I had previously thought.

—There is tremendous effort and concern across the state pertaining to development of a sound leadership program that can function under wise leadership and in varied environments.

—There's a lot of interest in school-based decision making.

—People from diverse backgrounds can, when given the time and initiative, work toward consensus and arrive at mutually acceptable decisions.

—I am part of a profession which is so challenging, diverse, and creative. Above all, this conference has reinforced that my colleagues are generously willing to share their enthusiasm and commitment to the education of our children.

Philosophy:

—People most directly concerned with curricula, policy, grading, discipline, have to be major investors in the decisions made in those areas.

—Decisions should be made by those people most directly affected by those decisions.

—It is our belief that the creation of a professional school climate will ultimately enhance student growth and development opportunities. We further believe that such a professional climate must include mutual trust, regular dialogue, and shared decision making among affected people.

—Leadership in schools is at a positive transition stage. It is a spirit of responsibility and leadership that make all people feel a part of getting school to be productive that counts.

—School building leadership should empower professionals to meet the agreed upon goals aimed at providing effective instructions for all students and in addition, providing resources and time to achieve this goal in an atmosphere garnering trust, integrity, and a positive attitude.

—Leadership evolves from trust, respect, and a perception that a particular person can guide you toward a goal you choose to accept.

—Faculty must play a role in decision making and development of policies within their specific buildings.

—Leadership must be inclusive, centered upon integrity, available at the level of the issue, supported by training.

—I believe that true "power" for the school site (or any) leader comes from shared decision making. That leader sets the tone, creates the climate for the school through his/her sensitivity, honesty, level of trust and willingness to take risks. That leader, through his own professional growth, his support, his facilitation and symbolic behavior—models behavior and demonstrates his priorities and mission. He nurtures, encourages, and advertises the successes and efforts of his school members.

—Conferences of this nature make people think about what shared leadership means, how it can happen, and why. Meeting and talking with professionals from other districts has been key to the success of this program. Our state has dedicated people who are each working hard and take their duties seriously.

I was pleased that:

—As the last few days proceeded, there seemed to develop a recognition that all groups represented have more in common than in "conflict."

—Participants were generally interested in working the issues of "how to" rather than "should we" move on to shared leadership strategies and models.

—No one model would serve all school districts and that models would have to be fashioned to fit each situation.

—The diversity of experience and situation has enabled me to better understand and appreciate the potential for shared decision making.

—All things are possible when trust is present.

The movement toward a formal participatory decision making process must begin with a careful assessment of the culture of the school. Unless the culture supports a participatory style, success is questionable. Thus, the staff and administrative leaders may first need to nurture by deed and example a change in the school's culture.

***SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS** listen to group reports.*

***DECISIONS, DECISIONS** as (from left to right): Saul Yanofsky, White Plains; Phil Hallinger, Director, Westchester Principals' Center; and Adele Wenz, White Plains work out the finer points.*

> ***"They ended with seeing more areas of agreement than conflict. In spite of hours spent talking, people wanted to return in the spring to talk some more."***